

device, the combination of:

- Handwritten: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100*
- a) means for inputting first information;
 - b) means for receiving[storing] secret key information from[which is stored in] an external device and for storing such received secret key information, said secret key information being the secret key of a person using the information input device[fed from the external device; and];
 - c) means for generating a digital signature based upon the first information and the secret key information; and
 - d) means for outputting said first information containing said digital signature,
- whereby the output information is provided with the digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.

6. (twice amended) An information input device comprising:

- Handwritten: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100*
- a) means for inputting first information;
 - b) means for compressing said first information;
 - c) means for receiving[storing] secret key information from an external device and for storing said received secret key information, said secret key information

being the secret key of a person using the information input device [which is stored in an external device and fed from the external device; and];

d) means for generating a distinguishing information based on the secret information and the information compressed by said compressing means[,]; and

e) means for outputting said first information containing said digital signature,

wherein said external device stores the secret key corresponding to a registered user; and

whereby the output information is provided with the digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.

10. (twice amended) An image input apparatus comprising:

a) an image input device for inputting said image data;

b) means for receiving secret key information from an external device;

c[b]) a memory for storing secret key information which is received from said [stored in an] external device and

received[fed] from the external device, said secret key
information being the secret key of a person using the
information input device[; and];

d[c]) an operation device for carrying out an
operation using the image data and the secret information; and

e) means for outputting said first information
containing said digital signature,

whereby the output information is provided with the
digital signature of the person who uses the information input
device.

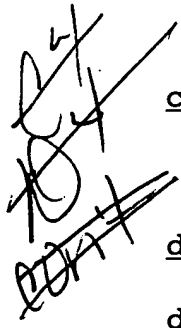
14. (twice amended) In an[An] image input system
[comprising]:

a) a first terminal device for inputting image
data;

b) a second terminal device for receiving secret
key information from an external device and having a memory for
storing said received secret key information, said secret key
information being information which corresponds[is
corresponding] to a user;[and]

c) an operator for executing a command based on an
algorithm for generating a digital signature by using the image

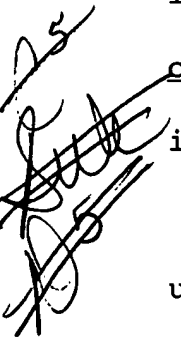
data and the secret key information; and

 d) means for outputting said first information
containing said digital signature,

whereby the output information is provided with the
digital signature of the person who uses the information input
device.

26. (twice amended) An information input method
comprising:

a) a step of inputting first information into an
information input device;

 b) a step of receiving secret key information from
an external device and for storing the received secret key
information, said secret key information being the secret key
of a person using the information input device[which is stored
in an external device and fed from the external device];[and]

c) a step of generating a digital signature based
upon the first information and the received secret key
information; and


d) outputting said first information containing
said digital signature,

whereby the output information is provided with the

digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.

27. (twice amended) A computer readable memory programmed to cooperate[which] cooperates with a data processor and an information input unit to carry out:

(a) a step of inputting first information into an information input device;

 (b) a step of receiving[storing] secret key information from[which is stored in] an external device and storing the received secret key information, said secret key information being the secret key of a person using the information input device[fed from the external device; and];

(c) a step of[for] generating a digital signature based upon the first information and the secret key information received from the external device; and

d) outputting said first information containing said digital signature,

whereby the output information is provided with the digital signature of the person who uses the information input device.